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SIPDIS

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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION ON MIDDLE EAST

Summary

-- Lead story in all papers today, May 21, focuses preparations for the Jordanian parliamentary elections as the candidate registration for the elections closed at 821 candidates yesterday. Papers also highlight America's warning of continued threats in Saudi Arabia. Majority of editorial commentary focus on the elections.

Editorial Commentary

-- "Operations here and there"

Daily columnist Urayb Rintawi writes on the op-ed page of center-left, influential Arabic daily Al-Dustour (05/21): "There is a strange coincidence of time between two phenomena that have never coincided before: the wave of operations in the West Bank and Gaza and Israel, and the wave of Al-Qa'eda operations in Riyadh and Casablanca.. It is a purely circumstantial coincidence of timing, nothing more and nothing less. Yet, this coincidence carries with some disturbing indications, namely that it can be employed to better serve Israel's objective of 'Talbanizing' the Palestinian Authority, of linking the Palestinian struggle with international terrorism, and of turning Israel's racist-based aggression and colonization into another chapter of the legitimate international war against terrorism.. Once again, the recent wave of operations in Palestine and the Arab world shows that combating violence, terrorism and extremism and containing the anti-peace movement cannot be achieved by military and security means alone, rather by addressing the faults, namely the occupation, the oppression, the frustration and the desperation."
GNEHM